



What we're doing in Massachusetts

U.S. EPA | STORMWATER OUTREACH AT EPA NEW ENGLAND



STORMWATER is a leading cause of poor water quality. Rain or melted snow runs down driveways, sidewalks and streets carrying oil, dirt and other pollutants into nearby waterways. Polluted runoff, which can cause erosion and flooding, runs into waterways and degrades plants, fish, shellfish and other wildlife. In water used for recreation, the runoff can lead to illness, and people who eat contaminated fish can also become sick. Untreated stormwater can also contaminate drinking water sources.

INTRO:

Permits to discharge stormwater in Massachusetts are issued by EPA New England through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. EPA issues stormwater general permits for some municipal sewer systems, construction sites disturbing more than an acre, and for many industrial sites. Each permitted municipal sewer system must establish a stormwater management program. In addition to permit requirements, standards for stormwater discharges are included in several state laws.

TO MANAGE STORMWATER IN MASSACHUSETTS WE ARE:

Demonstrating low impact development (LID) — The Ipswich River Watershed is the location of four LID and five water conservation projects that received a \$1 million EPA grant. The projects included a green roof on Whipple Riverview Place and on an affordable apartment building in Ipswich for seniors. Rain gardens and grass swales were installed at Partridgeberry Place in Ipswich, and an LID subdivision development that features 20 homes clustered on 10 acres with 38 acres of undisturbed land. The parking lot at Silver Lake town beach in Wilmington was rebuilt to show the effectiveness of using four types of porous pavement as well as planted areas that filter stormwater. Stormwater from a neighborhood near Silver Lake was treated using a series of rain gardens and porous pavers.*

Fining contractors and developers for discharges — A Massachusetts developer was fined \$135,000 by EPA New England for illegal stormwater discharges from a construction site. This developer did not use erosion and sediment controls and as a result, stormwater with high levels of sediment and residues of construction material flowed into a bordering waterbody.

Funding stormwater controls through utilities — The city of Chicopee established the first stormwater utility in Massachusetts in 1998. Since then other communities in the state, including Newton and Reading, have created

stormwater utilities. Newton is using stormwater utility funds to upgrade its infrastructure, help homeowners with flooding, carry out a water monitoring and testing program, and protect natural resources. Reading hired two professionals to maintain streams, purchase equipment, complete mapping, sample outfalls, and oversee illicit detection and removal. The city is also making capital improvements.*

Restoring bodies of water — The town of Plymouth has been working to restore Plymouth Harbor and the rivers that drain into this area. Many of the roads in Plymouth are old and carry stormwater into the harbor with little or no treatment. Using a mix of local, state and federal funds, the town is finding ways to fix its stormwater problems. The town has carried out several projects including the construction of rain gardens in both the waterfront park and riverfront parks to provide stormwater treatment near Plymouth Harbor.*

Using stormwater to meet water needs — The Children's Museum in Boston is capturing stormwater that would have otherwise run off into the nearby Fort Point Channel and reclaiming that water for toilets and irrigation. The museum built a green roof on a new addition and also installed dual flush toilets and waterless urinals. It is using recycled local building materials that release fewer pollutants into the air.*

* These projects received EPA funds or support

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